



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORPORATIONS**  
California's Investment and Financing Authority

**NEWS RELEASE**

**04-41**

**Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor**

**William P. Wood, Commissioner**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**California Department of Corporations Shuts  
Down Worthless "Prime Bank" Scam**

**SACRAMENTO** --- The California Department of Corporations ordered two individuals and one organization to immediately desist and refrain from offering and selling investment contracts and joint venture interests in a prime bank scheme in California, the Department announced today.

The order was issued to John Romero, Jennie Romero and ABBA Resources Unlimited of San Diego County for offering and selling unqualified securities in California. The securities offered for sale were for investment interests in a "Joint Venture Private Investment." The securities were in the form of written agreements stating that, among other things, "the funds invested in the program will be secured by a bank guarantee, the investor's initial participation will be with an authentic, valid, verifiable and confirmed bank instrument, rated at least AA by Moody's and Standard and Poor's, the program is reserved for accredited participants only; the minimum allowed for entry is One Million United States Dollars (USD \$1,000,000), and the 'Manager' will perform this (sic) best efforts to achieve and earning target of 5% per month or yield 15% per quarter."

These scams are often referred to as "Prime Bank Programs" and claim investors' funds will be used to purchase and trade "prime bank" financial instruments on clandestine overseas markets in order to generate huge returns in which the investor will share. However, neither of these instruments, nor the markets on which they allegedly trade, exist.

"When something looks too good to be true, it probably is," said Corporations Commissioner William Wood. "This is particularly true with secretive investments flaunted for their connection with 'prime banks' or 'wealthy investors,' which provide little or zero verifiable information."

The orders issued by the California Department of Corporations bar John Romero, Jennie Romero and ABBA Resources Unlimited from further offering or selling investment contracts and joint venture interests in ABBA Resources Unlimited.

The Department of Corporations is California's Investment and Financing Authority, reporting to the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and the Governor. The Department is responsible for the regulation, enforcement and licensing of securities, franchises, off-exchange commodities, investment and financial services, independent escrows, consumer and commercial finance lending and residential mortgage lending. For further information or to obtain a complaint form, see the Department's Web site at [www.corp.ca.gov](http://www.corp.ca.gov) or call 1-866-ASK-CORP (1-866-275-2677).